

School cleaners urged to form co-operatives

A LOCAL man has urged Frankston's schools cleaners to join together and form co-operatives.

The cleaners, who have been employed on a full time basis, have been sacked under the State Government's changes to the education system, and will be forced to tender for their old jobs.

David Griffiths, who has started Co-operation Project under the auspice of the Australian Association of Co-operatives, said people tended to overlook the option of forming a co-operative.

"There is an option for

school cleaners who are being forced to tender for their own jobs," he said.

"In the short term school councils may attempt to protect their cleaners but competitive tendering will make this difficult.

"Individual cleaners, however, do not have to compete against cleaning companies. Instead, they could join together and form cleaning cooperatives.

"Cleaning cooperatives would enable cleaners to pool their resources and costs, making them more competitive with the cleaning companies."

Mr Griffiths said coop-

eratives were a combination of democracy and free enterprise. Cleaners in a cooperative would be able to pursue their own interests, but also have the benefit of the cooperative structure.

A minimum of seven people were needed to form a cooperative.

"The more that are involved the more competitive they will be," Mr Griffiths said.

He said the opportunity to use cooperatives had been under used in the past.

People wanting to form a cooperative can contact Mr Griffiths on 789 5259 (ah).